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Summary record of the 30th meeting
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Chairperson: Ms. Ogwu ..... (Nigeria)
later: Mr. Torrington (Vice-Chairperson) ..... (Guyana)

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08-62047 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 46: Information and communication technologies for development (*continued*)
(A/C.2/63/L.10 and L.55)

Draft resolutions on information and communication technologies for development

1. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.55, which was being submitted by Mr. Torrington (Guyana), Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.10. The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

2. *Draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.55 was adopted.*

3. *Draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.10 was withdrawn.*

The meeting was suspended at 11.18 a.m. and resumed at 12.07 p.m.

Agenda item 47: Macroeconomic policy questions (*continued*)

(d) Commodities (*continued*) (A/C.2/63/L.42)

Draft resolution on commodities

4. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.42. No changes had been made to the draft resolution following informal consultations, and it had no programme budget implications.

5. *Draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.42 was adopted.*

Agenda item 49: Sustainable development (*continued*)
(A/C.2/63/L.24/Rev.1)

Draft resolution on the oil slick on Lebanese shores

6. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.24. The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

7. **Mr. Saleh** (Lebanon), speaking as the main sponsor of the draft resolution, said that there had been some minor editorial corrections to the French version.

8. **Ms. Greenaway** (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China as a sponsor of the draft resolution, said that there had been some minor editorial corrections to the English version.

9. **The Chairman** said that a recorded vote had been requested on the draft resolution.

10. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.24/Rev.1.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Chad, Colombia.

11. *Draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.24/Rev.1 was adopted by 154 votes to 5, with 3 abstentions.*

12. **Ms. Lebovits** (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Croatia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Liechtenstein, Republic of Moldova, Norway and Ukraine, said that the member States of the European Union had been among the first to provide assistance to Lebanon to mitigate the environmental consequences of the oil slick and would continue to do so. She stressed that the resolution should not be diluted and that the position taken during the current session should not prejudice the position that might be taken the following year.

13. **Mr. Ben-Eliezer** (Israel) said that in politicizing what should be treated as a local environmental issue, the resolution reflected the disturbing increase in politicization of the Committee's work in general, which distracted it from issues of substance. The resolution neglected to mention the 12 July 2006 kidnapping of Israeli Defence Force soldiers by the Hizbullah organization, which had provoked the hostilities in the first place; that incident had only been made possible because the Government of Lebanon had failed to exercise its sovereignty and disarm the Hizbullah militia in accordance with Security Council resolution 1559 (2004).

14. His country had cooperated with United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to address environmental concerns with regard to Lebanon's coastline. Had the resolution been serious about addressing environmental issues, it would have mentioned the many thousands of acres of forest in his country that had been destroyed by the Hizbullah organization's rockets. The resolution's call for a new mechanism would create yet another permanent and expensive installation of anti-Israelism in the United Nations system. Since 1991 there had been several oil spills of equal or greater tonnage than the spill in question, and no United Nations resolutions had resulted. He suggested that the Committee should adopt a general resolution on oil spills rather than engaging in the obvious act of political demonization represented by the resolution at hand.

15. **Mr. Saleh** (Lebanon) said that the consequences of the Israeli attack had adversely affected all three pillars — economic, social and environmental — of sustainable development in his country. Atmospheric contamination from the fire at the oil storage facility had caused respiratory symptoms among the population in the immediate area and had had a regional impact over a wide radius. The large amount of oil released into the sea had affected the natural habitats of many species. Damage to fish larvae and eggs had reduced the fish population and harmed his country's fishing industry. Pollution had even seeped from the sea into groundwater. The World Bank had estimated the damage at US$ 203 million, or one per cent of Lebanon's annual GDP for 2006, not including health, environmental and clean-up costs.

16. The fact that Israeli forces had targeted the oil storage facility two days in a row demonstrated that the attack was premeditated, in violation of provisions of Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions prohibiting methods of warfare that may be expected to cause damage to the natural environment. A United Nations Development Programme report had suggested that the attack could be interpreted as a war crime. The resolution would send a strong message upholding international legal provisions against attacks on the environment.

17. In response to the statement by the representative of Israel, he noted that had Israel implemented the relevant United Nations resolutions over the years, the entire region might have been spared the cycle of violence in which it found itself. The Hizbullah organization had not even existed prior to the Israeli invasion of 1982, and its activities fell well within the right of peoples to defend themselves and resist foreign occupation as enshrined in international humanitarian law, United Nations resolutions, and the Charter of the United Nations. The Israeli Government's own Winograd report had shown that Israel had been preparing its 2006 aggression against Lebanon for months and had merely taken the opportunity to launch it on 12 July. The fact that there were oil spills in other parts of the world was not a reason for the international community to close its eyes to the huge environmental damage caused by the Israeli attack. Israel needed to learn that it could not promote its interests by force of arms.

(b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (*continued*) (A/C.2/63/L.12, L.13, L.44 and L.52)

Draft resolutions on the follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

18. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.44, which was being submitted by Mr. Metelitsa (Belarus), Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.12.

19. **Mr. Metelitsa** (Belarus), Vice-Chairperson, said that, at the end of paragraph 17, a phrase should be inserted, which would read, "as part of the General Assembly and requests the Secretary-General to report at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly on possible arrangements for the review;".

20. **Ms. de Laurentis** (Secretary of the Committee) said that should the Committee accept the revision made by the Vice-Chairperson, her oral statement on programme budget implications would no longer be applicable.

21. *Draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.44, as orally revised, was adopted.*

22. *Draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.12 was withdrawn.*

23. **Mr. Rangel** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that his country continued to support the development of small island developing States and, to that end, the full implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. His delegation took it that paragraphs 26 and 27 of the Mauritius Strategy applied solely to States parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. As the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela was not a party to that Convention, it was not obliged to apply related provisions, except those it had already recognized and incorporated into its legislation.

Draft resolutions entitled "Towards the sustainable development of the Caribbean Sea for present and future generations"

24. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.52, which was being submitted by Mr. Metelitsa (Belarus), Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.13. The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

25. **Ms. Santizo-Sandoval** (Guatemala) said that the draft resolution was a major step towards achieving sustainability for the Caribbean region.

26. She suggested making a few changes to the draft resolution in order to more accurately reflect the agreements reached in the negotiations process. In addition to noting a minor drafting change, she said that in the thirteenth preambular paragraph, the first letter of each word in the phrase "large marine ecosystems" should be capitalized; furthermore, the phrase "wider Caribbean Sea region" in the twentieth preambular paragraph and the phrase "wider Caribbean region" in paragraph 12 should be replaced with "Wider Caribbean Region" to reflect the official name of the region. Finally, the phrase ", inter alia," should be inserted after the word "including" in paragraphs 1 and 2.

27. *Mr. Torrington (Guyana), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.*

28. *Draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.52, as orally revised, was adopted.*

29. *Draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.13 was withdrawn.*

30. **Mr. Söylemez** (Turkey) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution because it addressed a number of important issues. However, it wished to dissociate itself from references to international instruments to which Turkey was not a party. The fact that his delegation had joined the consensus should not be interpreted as a change in his country's legal position.

31. **Mr. Meurs** (United States of America) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution because, as a Caribbean nation, the United States viewed "consideration of the concept of the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development" as a regional and domestic concern of Caribbean States in seeking to improve regional coordination on environmental and natural resource-related issues.

32. The creation of such areas must be consistent with international law, as reflected in the text of the draft resolution. Furthermore, the right to freedom of navigation should in no way be infringed by any consideration or future designation of the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development. Therefore, consideration of the features of such a special area must be narrowly focused on the objectives to be achieved. Lastly, any such designation in the future must involve the consensus of all Caribbean nations.

33. **Mr. Rangel** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that he firmly supported the development of the Caribbean region but reiterated that his country should not be obliged to comply with paragraphs 26 and 27 of the Mauritius Strategy, as it was not a party to the instrument mentioned therein.

34. **Ms. Moseley** (Barbados) said that the Caribbean Sea was a vital region, both socially and culturally. Her delegation would continue to work towards the designation of that region as a special area within the context of sustainable development, in accordance with the rules of international law. She noted the concerns of some delegations and assured them of her openness and willingness to address all such concerns.

(c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (*continued*) (A/C.2/63/L.28, L.30, L.50 and L.51)

Draft resolutions on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

35. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.51, which was being submitted by Mr. Metelitsa (Belarus), Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.28. The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

36. *Draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.51 was adopted.*

37. *Draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.28 was withdrawn.*

Draft resolutions on natural disasters and vulnerability

38. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.50, which was being submitted by Mr. Metelitsa (Belarus), Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.30. The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

39. **Ms. Grau** (Switzerland) said that, in the fifth preambular paragraph, the word "developing" should be deleted in the phrase "disaster-prone developing countries".

40. *Draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.50, as orally revised, was adopted.*

41. *Draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.30 was withdrawn.*

(e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (*continued*) (A/C.2/63/L.16 and L.53)

Draft resolutions on the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

42. **The Chairperson** introduced draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.53, which was being submitted by Mr. Metelitsa (Belarus), Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.16. The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

43. **Mr. Saleh** (Lebanon) said that, in the third preambular paragraph, the phrase "articles 1, 2 and 3 of the Convention" should be revised to read "articles 1 and 3 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa". The phrase "2008-2018" should be added, in brackets, at the end of the fourth preambular paragraph.

44. In the seventh preambular paragraph, the words "the secretariats of" should be deleted, as should the phrase "adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development".

45. In paragraph 5, the words "by the Conference of the Parties" should be deleted and the words "of the United Nations" should be inserted after "Joint Inspection Unit". In paragraph 9, the word "preventing" should be changed to "protecting" and the words "and to create" should be replaced with the words "in order to create". In paragraph 12, the words "States parties to the Convention" should be replaced with "countries parties" and, in paragraph 13, the words "and adequate" should be inserted after the word

"sufficient". He also made a number of minor drafting changes.

46. *Draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.53, as orally revised, was adopted.*

47. *Draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.16 was withdrawn.*

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.